



## **Marilyn Anne Hayenga**

**April 23, 1947 ~ November 06, 2019**

Marilyn Anne Hayenga was born on April 23, 1947 in St. Luke's, Aberdeen, South Dakota. Her parents, Ed and Olive Hayenga, drove in a blinding snowstorm to get to the hospital. Soon after she was born, she was taken home to the farm where she was introduced to her two older siblings. She exhibited humor, tenacity and energy. Her father was often heard laughing at some wisecrack she made.

Marilyn loved living on the farm and experiencing everything about it. She knew at an early age (maybe 3 or 4) she wanted to be a farmer. One day she covered her hands and face with dirt and grease. Promptly she went into the shop to announce she was a farmer and wanted to work with guys. Farm life gave her an opportunity to explore and experience her dreams. Her Dad could trust her and depended on her to operate any of the equipment and work in the field. When chores were completed, she played hoops or baseball with her brother, Cal. In the fall she would make a hurdle to jump over and a pile of leaves to fall in. Marilyn loved all animals, particularly horses. At the end of 3rd grade she bought a horse named Red. Whenever she was riding her horse, she felt like she was on top of the world.

Marilyn attended the local public school excelling in all the classes and extra activities. All students watched the clock, so they knew when to rush out for recess. She was the only girl to play basketball or baseball with the boys. Marilyn was always the first student chosen by any team captain not only because of her athletic ability but because she added fun and laughter. In 1965 she graduated and was in the last graduating class of Andover.

Marilyn attended college at Dakota Wesleyan in Mitchell, South Dakota. While there her wit and humor resulted in making friends for life. Those friends nicknamed her "Speed" because she could get up 10 minutes before class and still make it on time. In fact, a group went to the highway department to get a specialized speed sign, which she kept for decades. After receiving her bachelor's degree in education, she attended the University of Kansas to obtain a master's degree in special education.

Marilyn enjoyed her classes at the university and professional connections, so she remained there to begin a career in teaching. Her tag-a-long sister, Margi joined her in the Shawnee Mission school district. After 3 years teaching there, they decided to seek other places to teach. Both received contracts in Montana but not in the same districts.

In the fall of 1974 Marilyn moved to Bozeman where she stayed for the remaining years of her life. She started her career teaching special education at the Emerson. Later she was transferred to Willson and then Chief Joseph teaching English and social studies. Marilyn was eager to learn so she took many classes to enhance her teaching skills. She also attended woodworking classes and made most of the wood furniture for her home. She loved her students and peers and most of her students loved her. She was heartbroken when her physician told her she must retire in 2001.

During summer vacations Marilyn usually returned to the farm. She and her companions (Mom, Dad and Sharon) traveled many places in the USA and around the world. Often a niece and/or nephew were invited to go along.

In 1989 her daughter, Kathryn arrived. Marilyn loved parenting and doing activities with Kathryn. Together they did many crafts such as making Christmas ornaments, pins, earrings and hair combs. They managed to find Indian recipes so Kathryn could eat foods from India. They played card games and board games. They dreamed about vacations they'd like to take, going on trips to Canada, Iceland and India. As KM got older, Marilyn helped her study for college classes. Marilyn had spent many years wanting to parent and adopting Kathryn was a truly momentous occasion.

In addition to teaching, Marilyn attended the Bozeman United Methodist Church and was on many committees. Marilyn was a member of BEA, MEA and a strong advocate for education. She was a past member of Delta Kappa Gamma. She remained

connected with her teaching friends through Big Sky Retired Teachers and Willson Retired Teachers. She faithfully attended their monthly luncheons. Marilyn went swimming every morning where she met new friends. Those who knew her were blessed with her uncanny ability to find humor and laugh contagiously.

Marilyn died on November 6, 2019 at the Gallatin Rest Home where she was recuperating from surgery.

Marilyn was preceded in death by her parents and sister, Sharon. Surviving family members are daughter Kathryn; brothers Cal (Mary) and Kent and sister Margi. Also surviving her are three nephews, one niece and countless people who were touched by her kindness.

A Celebration of Marilyn's life will be held at 11a.m. Thursday, November 14th at the Bozeman United Methodist Church.

Memorials may be made in her name to Bozeman United Methodist Church, 121 S. Willson Ave and Habitat for Humanity, 230 Arden Dr., Belgrade.